

# **Floss & Room Service**

How to Be. Where to Stay.

## **Sunday, August 26, 2007**

### **Seniors Having Flying Companions Will Travel**

(It's been a minute, I know...)

Reflection:

My great-grandmother was my greatest example of a world traveler. Prior to my being born, in her younger days, she had visited countries on all of the continents save Antarctica.

I was her firstborn great-grandchild. While I was forming in my mother's womb, she took a trip to Denmark, where she learned that great-grandmothers there were called "Besty". Hence, this is what she decided I would call her, and so it was for me, and all my siblings and cousins who followed.

Besty had collected foreign coins from all her travels. Even becoming a widow did not stop her. In fact, it appeared she traveled all the more as a result. One day she presented her coins as gift to me when I was still but a girl. She told me stories that went along with the coins and the travels, and I was a captive audience. Besty was the most intrepid person I knew, and she's the main influencer of my wanderlust today.

As she grew older, Besty's travels slowed to stateside and usually consisted of attending family reunions of her and my great-grandfather's kinfolk. But her globally cosmopolitan style and attitude remained intact 'til her last days.

I thought of her when I came across the service called [Flying Companions](#). How much more traveling would she have done, had this company been in existence in her day?

Flying Companions LLC is an Atlanta-based company with a brilliant and Baby Boomer-timely concept headed by Doug Iannelli. Flying Companions offers assistance to senior adults who want to maintain their independence and continue to travel by air, through the provision of an experienced travel companion to accompany them on their flight—and on their entire trip—if desired.

The companion handles all of the logistical details that may prove challenging for a senior navigating the post 9/11 twists and turns of airport processing and flight.

So just who are these individuals that serve as Flying Companions who are entrusted with the care of beloved traveling seniors? They are fully insured former airline professionals and experienced travelers with a heart for seniors who have successfully gone through exhaustive background checks.

The service offered by Flying Companions is quite comprehensive. Their companions can research airfares and make the most optimal travel arrangements and then, come the day of the trip, escort the senior from the moment he/she arrives at the airport until they reach the desired destination. In fact, having the senior get picked up at home by a companion is also an option.

**Wheelchair assistance, airport check-in and security navigation, carry-on luggage help, boarding assistance, bathroom trips, connecting flights and luggage retrieval—for this and more the companion is there to lend a hand.**

**The family members of the traveling senior can rest easy knowing that they will be kept informed of all the journey legs' developments. The companion keeps in contact with them via phone or email during the course of the trip.**

**The fees for such attentiveness vary, based upon the level of coordination by Flying Companions for each uniquely individual trip. Understandably, the companion's roundtrip airfare and any other expenses are the responsibility of the senior or those caring for him/her.**

**If today's seniors are anything like my Besty, they wouldn't mind making the monetary investment in a good time and peace of mind.**